

Message Text

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SUBJ: ANGOLA - PRESIDENT PEREZ ON CUBAN INTERVENTION

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT PEREZ SEES CUBA'S INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA AS A THREAT TO HIS CHERISHED GOAL OF LATIN AMERICAN SOLIDARITY. HE HAS SENT WORD TO FIDEL CASTRO VIA GENERAL TORRIJOS THAT THE INTERVENTION RISKS THE SUCCESS OF THE SUMMIT MEETING OF LATIN AMERICAN CHIEFS OF STATE PLANNED FOR NEXT SUMMER IN PANAM. HE PROBABLY DOES NOT EXPECT THIS WARNING TO DO ANY GOOD BUT MAY WELL KEEP UP THE PRESSURE. A RECENT PIECE IN THE MIAMI HERALD ACCURATELY REFLECTS THE GOV POSITION ON ANGOLA AND CAN BE TAKEN AS A PUBLIC ADMINISHMENT OF CASTRO. END SUMMARY.

2. CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ DISCUSSED WITH ME THE CUBAN ROLE IN ANGOLA ON JAN 22. WE WERE TOGETHER ABOARD HIS PLANE EN ROUTE TO SAN CRISTOBAL IN SOUTHWESTERN VENEZUELA.

3. THE PRESIDENT INSISTED AS HE DID IN A PREVIOUS EXCHANGE WITH ME ON THIS ISSUE THAT CASTRO COULD HAVE NO POSSIBLE INTEREST IN ANGOLA BEYOND SERVING SOVIET AMBITIONS. HE DISCOUNTED THE IDEOLOGICAL FACTOR, ASSERTING THAT ONLY CASTRO'S ADHERENCE TO THE SOVIET CAUSE EXPLAINS HIS WILLINGNESS TO RISK THE RECONCILIATION WITH LATIN AMERICA THAT IS SO IMPORTANT TO HIM. PEREZ NOTED THAT CASTRO HAD MADE HIS "CHOICE" AS FAR AS THE SOVIETS ARE CONCERNED SOME YEARS BACK. (IN OUR PREVIOUS CONVERSATION ON DEC 16 THE PRESIDENT EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THE CONSIDERABLE

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MILITARIZATION OF THE CUBAN SOCIETY AND GOVT WAS ALSO A

FACTOR IN THE INTERVENTION. HE THOUGHT THAT ANGOLA PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY TO EMPLOY THE CUBAN MILITARY MACHINE AND TO RELEASE CUBAN MILITARY ENERGIES.)

4. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT HE HAD ASKED TORRIJOS TO RAISE WITH CASTRO THE ANGOLAN PROBLEM DURING THE PANAMANIAN'S RECENT VISIT TO HAVANA. TORRIJOS WAS TO WARN FIDEL THAT THE CUBAN MILITARY ADVENTURE THREATENED THE SUCCESS OF THE "AMPHYCTYONIC" CONFERENCE OF LATIN AMERICAN CHIEFS OF STATE SCHEDULED FOR NEXT JUNE IN PANAM. PERZ THOUGHT THAT ANGOLA INTRODUCED A DIVISIVE ISSUE INTO WHAT SHOULD BE A HARMONIOUS MEETING SIGNALING CUBA'S RETURN TO THE FOLD. IN HIS JUDGMENT A NUMBER OF HIS LATIN AMERICAN COLLEAGUES WOULD FIND IT THAT MUCH MORE DIFFICULT TO SIT DOWN AT THE SAME TABLE WITH CASTRO IF THE ANGOLAN INTERVENTION CONTINUED. THE PRESIDENT SAID HE WAS AWAITING THE REPORT OF AN INTERMEDIARY TO LEARN WHAT SUCCESS TORRIJOS MIGHT HAVE HAD WITH THIS LINE OF ARGUMENT.

5. PEREZ ALSO EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT GUYANA'S RECOGNITION OF THE MPLA AND APPARENT READINESS TO ASSIST THE CUBANS. HE SAID THAT AT THE TIME OF THE GOV DEMARCHE ON THE USE OF GUYANESE TERRITORY FOR TRANSITING CUBAN AIRCRAFT BURNHAM HAD SUGGESTED THAT THE TWO OF THEM MEET WITH FIDEL IN GEORGETOWN. PEREZ RESPONDED THAT THERE COULD BE NO SUCH MEETING WHILE TBANS WERE IN ANGOLA. HE ALSO PURPORTEDLY WARNED BURNHAM THAT THE FAVORABLE TREATMENT ON PETROLEUM SALES THE GOG IS SEEKING THRU AN EXPANDED OIL FACILITY WOULD BE IN JEOPARDY IF "ONE DROP OF VENEZUELAN OIL" WENT TO FUEL CUBAN AIRCRAFT.

6. THE PRESIDENT CONCLUDED BY STATING WITH HIS CUSTOMARY VIGOR THAT THE CUBAN INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA IS A GROSS VIOLATION OF "HEMISPHERIC PRINCIPLES."

7. COMMENT: CARLOS ANDRES IS OBVIOUSLY CONSIDERABLY DISTURBED BY WHAT THE CUBAN ADVENTURE COULD DO TO HIS VISION OF A UNITED LATIN AMERICA WORKING TOGETHER IN POLITICAL HARMONY TO ADVANCE THE REGION'S ECONOMIC INTERESTS. I DOUBT THAT THIS CONCERN WOULD BE NEARLY AS DEEP IF THE USG HAD NOT PRESSED THE ISSUE WITH SO MUCH FORCE INTERNATIONALLY. HE CORRECTLY SEES IT NOW AS REINTRODUCING IDEOLOGICAL DISCORD IN THE HEMISPHERE
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WITH THE MORE CONSERVATIVE GOVTS FOLLOWING THE US LEAD IN REJECTING RAPPROCHEMENT WITH AN INTERVENTIONIST CUBA. AT THE SAME TIME I ALSO DOUBT THAT HE SERIOUSLY EXPECTS HIS ADMONISHMENTS VIA TORRIJOS TO DO ANY GOOD. HE MUST HOPE THAT SOMEHOW THE ISSUE CAN BE RESOLVED OR PAPERED OVER BY THE TIME OF THE AMPHYCTYONIC CONFERENCE-- A MEETING BY WHICH HE SETS THE GREATEST STORE IN HIS SEARCH FOR LATIN AMERICAN SOLIDARITY.

8. THE RECENT PIECE BY BILL MONTALBANO IN THE MIAMI HERALD
(CARRIED HERE IN THE DAILY JOURNAL JAN 25) IS AN AUTHORITATIVE
STATEMENT OF THE GOV POSITION ON ANGOLA. I ASSUME THAT THE
SOURCE WAS FOREIGN MINISTER ESCOVAR SALOM.
SHLAUDEMAN

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